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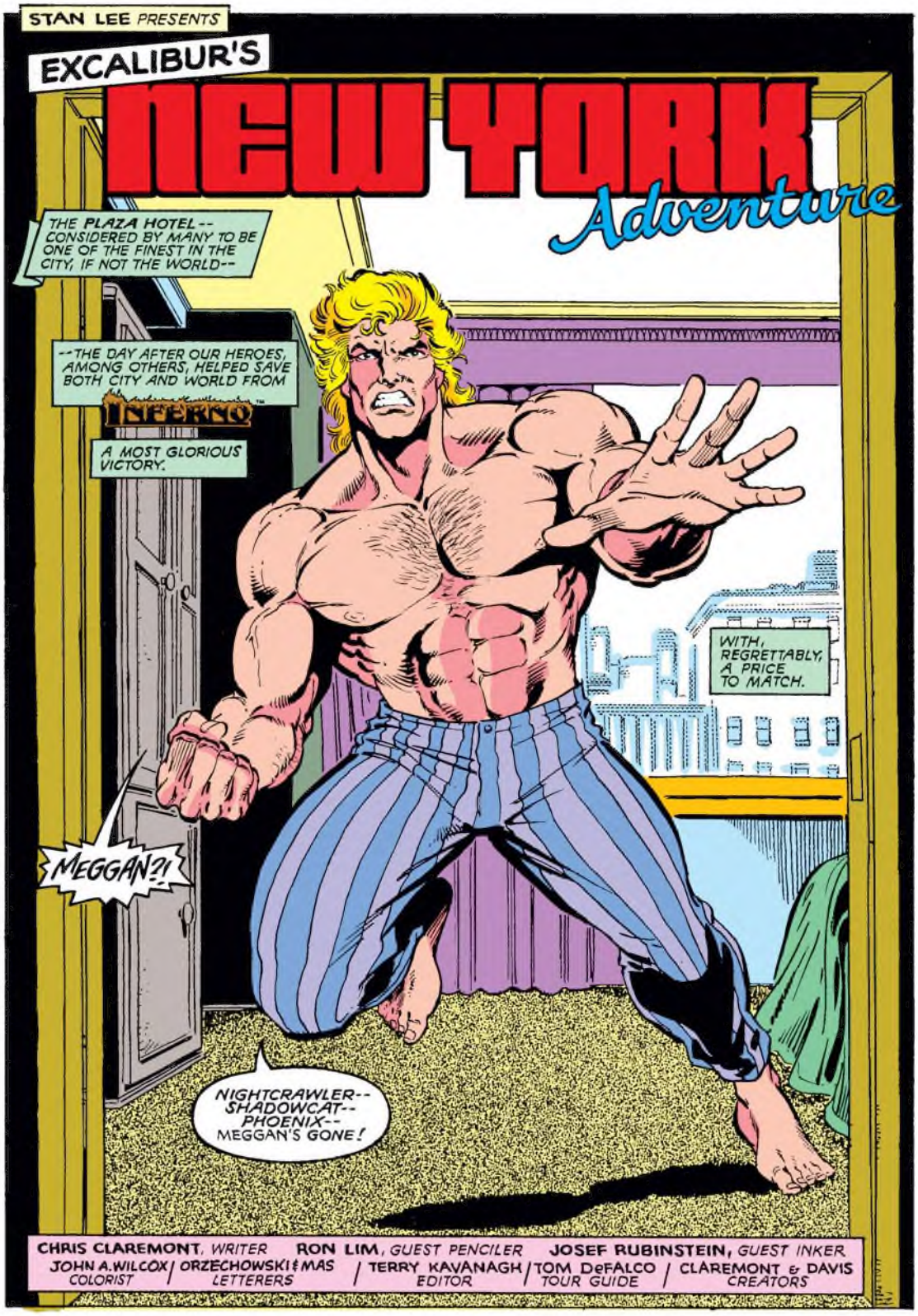
AUTHORITY
EXCALIBUR
MAYHEM in MANHATTAN!
7 AM-7 PM
NO
LEFT TURN
ONE WAY


STAN LEE PRESENTS
EXCALIBUR'S
NEW YORK
Adventure
THE PLAZA HOTEL-- CONSIDERED BY MANY TO BE ONE OF THE FINEST IN THE CITY, IF NOT THE WORLD--
--THE DAY AFTER OUR HEROES, AMONG OTHERS, HELPED SAVE BOTH CITY AND WORLD FROM
INFERNO
A MOST GLORIOUS VICTORY.
WITH, REGRETTABLY, A PRICE TO MATCH.
MEGGAN?!
NIGHTCRAWLER-- SHADOWCAT-- PHOENIX-- MEGGAN'S GONE!
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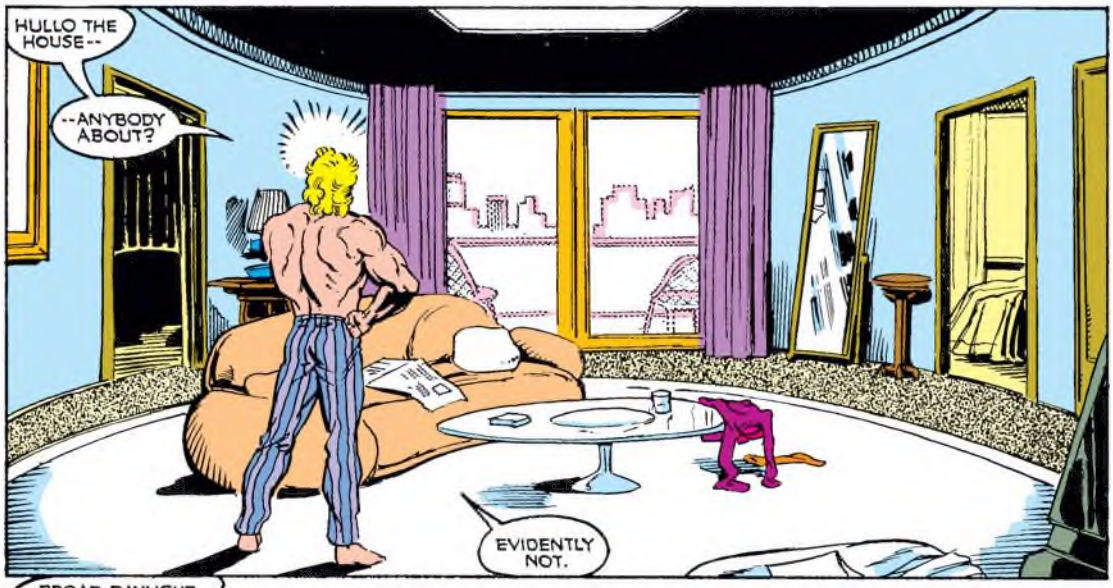
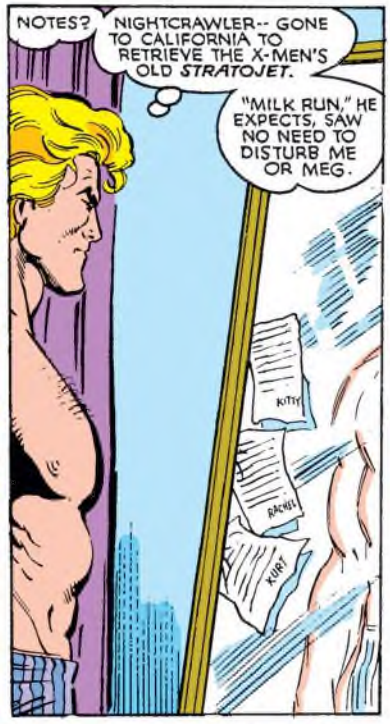
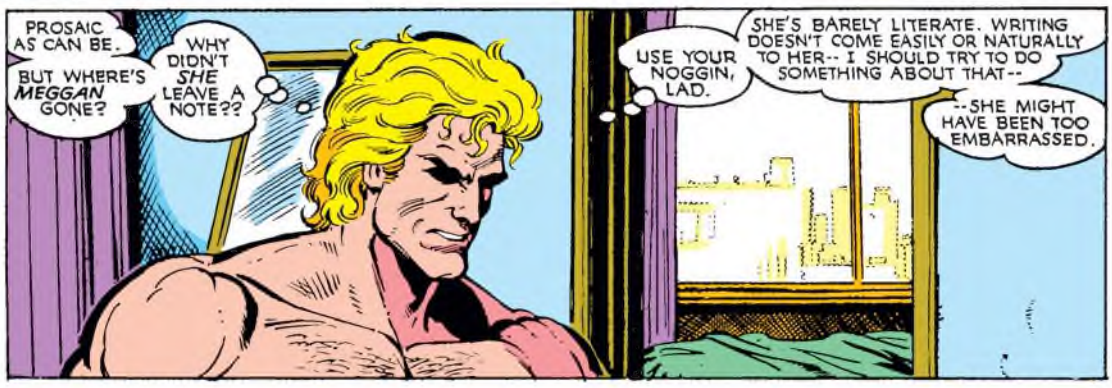
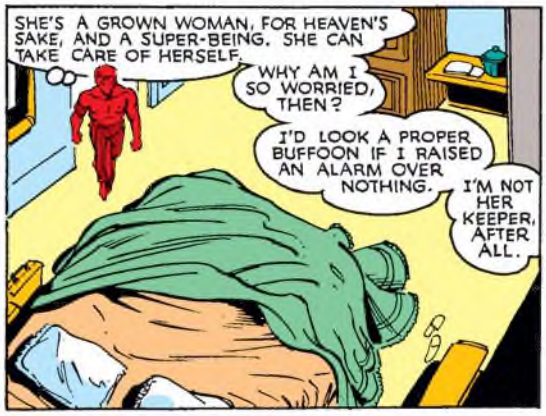

HULLO THE HOUSE--
--ANYBODY ABOUT?
EVIDENTLY NOT.

BROAD DAYLIGHT OUT THE WINDOWS.
HOW LATE HAVE I SLEPT?


NOTES?
NIGHTCRAWLER-- GONE TO CALIFORNIA TO RETRIEVE THE X-MEN'S OLD *STRATOJET*.
"MILK RUN," HE EXPECTS, SAW NO NEED TO DISTURB ME OR MEG.
KITTY
RACHEL
KURT

CONSIDERATE OF HIM.
SO MEGGAN WAS HERE WHEN HE LEFT.
SHADOWCAT'S OFF TO ***PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL*** TO COLLECT SOME PERSONAL BELONGINGS...
...AND PHOENIX, TO VISIT HER BABY BROTHER.

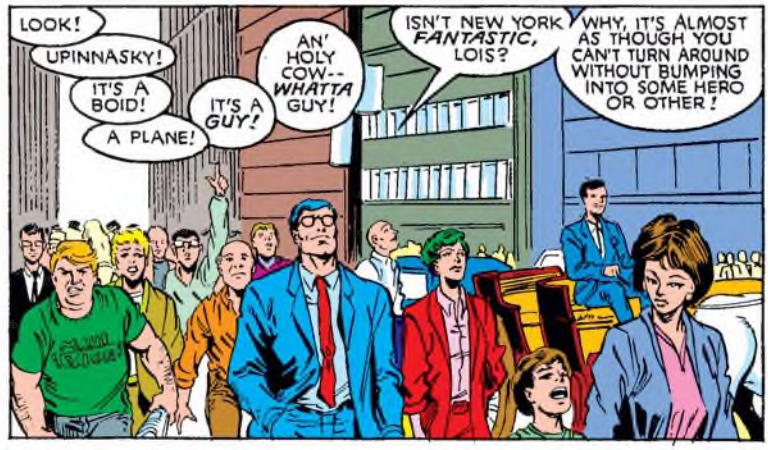

PROSAIC AS CAN BE.
BUT WHERE'S ***MEGGAN*** GONE?
WHY DIDN'T ***SHE*** LEAVE A NOTE??
USE YOUR NOGGIN, LAD.
SHE'S BARELY LITERATE. WRITING DOESN'T COME EASILY OR NATURALLY TO HER-- I SHOULD TRY TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT--
--SHE MIGHT HAVE BEEN TOO EMBARRASSED.


SHE'S A GROWN WOMAN, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE, AND A SUPER-BEING. SHE CAN TAKE CARE OF HERSELF.
WHY AM I SO WORRIED, THEN?
I'D LOOK A PROPER BUFFOON IF I RAISED AN ALARM OVER NOTHING.
I'M NOT HER KEEPER, AFTER ALL.

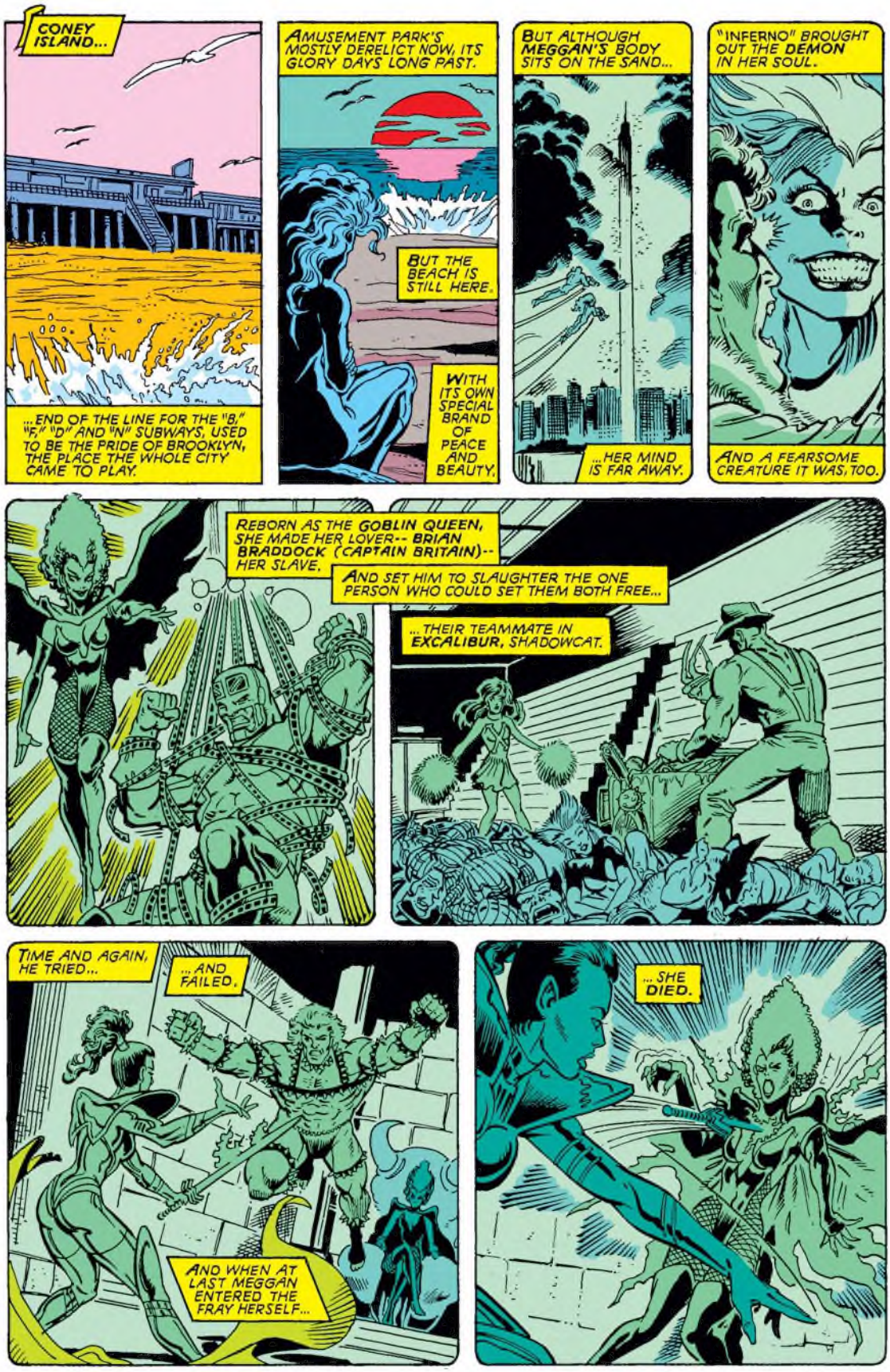
AND YET...
...AND YET...
...PERHAPS A WHISKEY, TO SETTLE MY NERVES, GIVE ME AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROPERLY THINK THINGS THROUGH.

BETTER TO PLAY THE FOOL THAN THE DRUNK.
SOMETHING *IS* WRONG, I'M SURE OF IT--
--BUT WITH MEGGAN, OR ME?
MY UNIFORM WAS DESTROYED DURING "*INFERNO*."
THESE GYM TOGS THE HOTEL PROVIDED ARE A POOR SUBSTITUTE.

BUT THEY'LL HAVE TO DO.
PROBLEM IS, NEW YORK IS A *HUGE* CITY--
--AND THAT'S ASSUMING MEGGAN'S EVEN HERE--
--HOW THE DEVIL AM I GOING TO FIND HER?!


LOOK!
UPINNASKY!
IT'S A BOID!
A PLANE!
IT'S A *GUY!*
AN' HOLY COW-- *WHATTA* GUY!
ISN'T NEW YORK *FANTASTIC,* LOIS?
WHY, IT'S ALMOST AS THOUGH YOU CAN'T TURN AROUND WITHOUT BUMPING INTO SOME HERO OR OTHER!

Sigh--CLARK, BE REAL!
IF YOU'VE SEEN *ONE* HYPERTHYROID, EGOMANIACAL EXHIBITIONIST IN SKINTIGHTS--
--YOU'VE SEEN 'EM *ALL!*

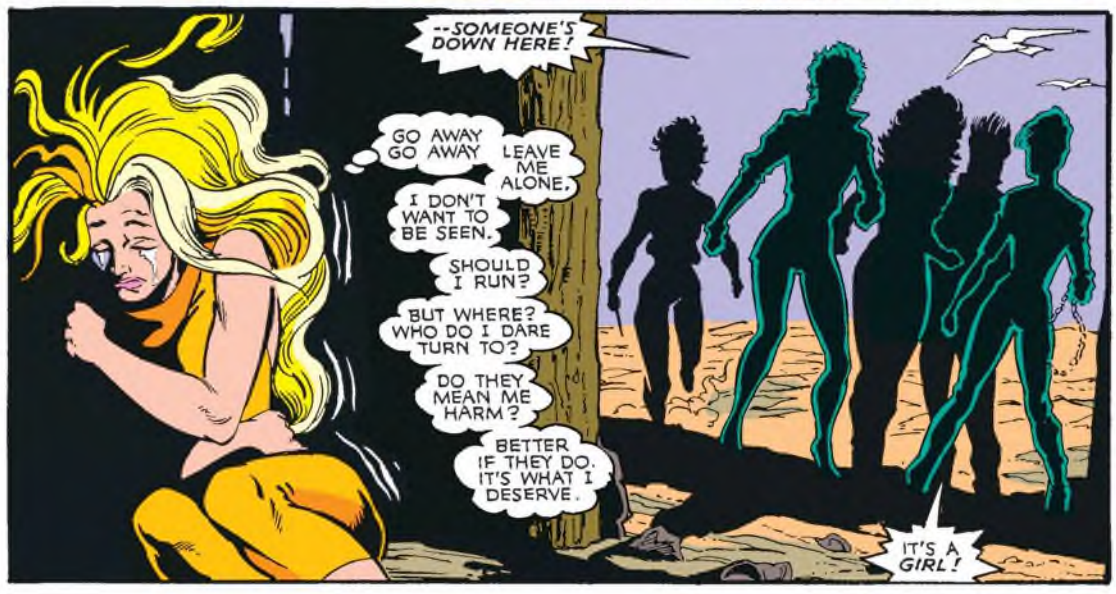

CONEY ISLAND...
...END OF THE LINE FOR THE "B," "F," "D" AND "N" SUBWAYS, USED TO BE THE PRIDE OF BROOKLYN, THE PLACE THE WHOLE CITY CAME TO PLAY.
AMUSEMENT PARK'S MOSTLY DERELICT NOW, ITS GLORY DAYS LONG PAST.
BUT THE BEACH IS STILL HERE.
WITH ITS OWN SPECIAL BRAND OF PEACE AND BEAUTY.
BUT ALTHOUGH MEGGAN'S BODY SITS ON THE SAND...
...HER MIND IS FAR AWAY.
"INFERNO" BROUGHT OUT THE DEMON IN HER SOUL.
AND A FEARSOME CREATURE IT WAS, TOO.
REBORN AS THE GOBLIN QUEEN, SHE MADE HER LOVER-- BRIAN BRADDOCK (CAPTAIN BRITAIN)-- HER SLAVE.
AND SET HIM TO SLAUGHTER THE ONE PERSON WHO COULD SET THEM BOTH FREE...
...THEIR TEAMMATE IN EXCALIBUR, SHADOWCAT.
TIME AND AGAIN, HE TRIED...
...AND FAILED.
AND WHEN AT LAST MEGGAN ENTERED THE FRAY HERSELF...
...SHE DIED.

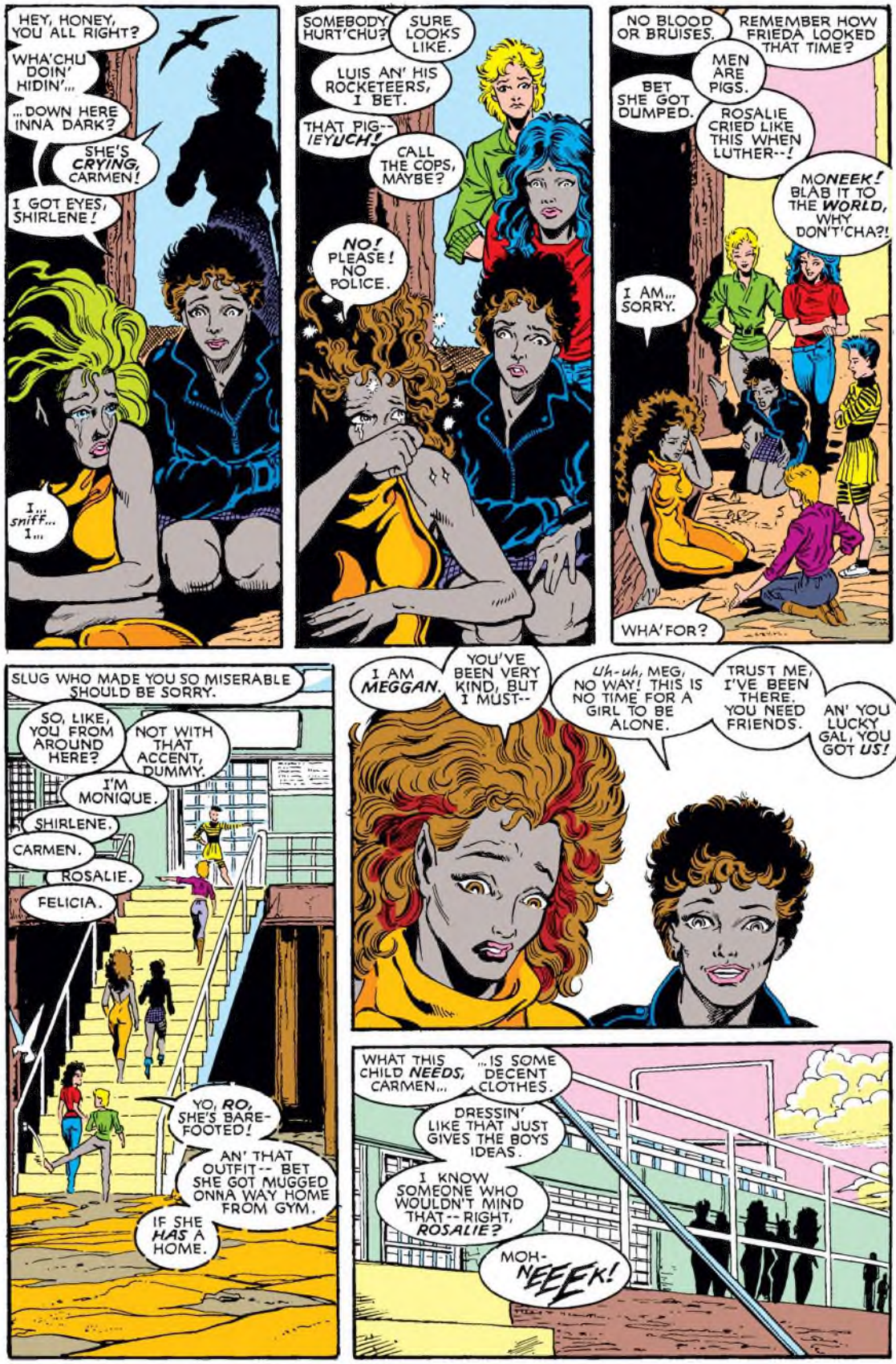
Oh
HURTS
OW
HURTS
Oh
Oh
Oh

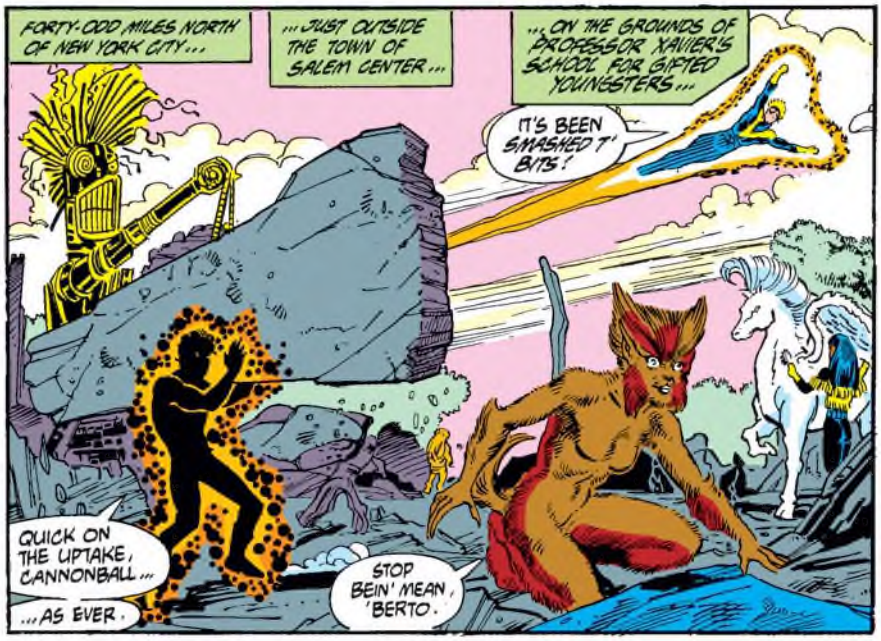
AWFUL!
WHAT I WAS. WHAT I...
...DID.
TO BRIAN.
IT WAS SO EASY!

HOW CAN HE STILL LOVE ME, AFTER THAT?
HOW CAN ANY OF THE OTHERS TRUST ME, EVER AGAIN?!
HOW CAN I TRUST MYSELF?!

AM I TRULY SO EVIL AT HEART?
OR-- JUST A LUMP OF CLAY...
...TO BE SHAPED THIS WAY AND THAT...
...BY WHOEVER HAS THE POWER-- HYAH?!
HEY-- UNDERNEATH THE PIER--

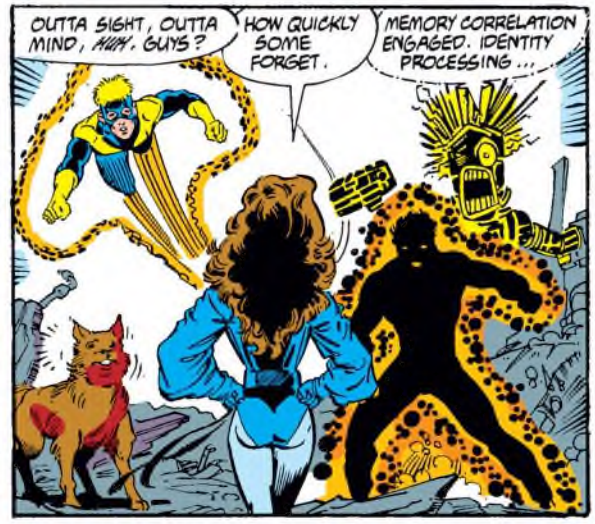

--SOMEONE'S DOWN HERE!
GO AWAY GO AWAY
LEAVE ME ALONE.
I DON'T WANT TO BE SEEN.
SHOULD I RUN?
BUT WHERE? WHO DO I DARE TURN TO?
DO THEY MEAN ME HARM?
BETTER IF THEY DO. IT'S WHAT I DESERVE.
IT'S A GIRL!


HEY, HONEY, YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHA'CHU DOIN' HIDIN'...
...DOWN HERE INNA DARK?
SHE'S CRYING, CARMEN!
I GOT EYES, SHIRLENE!
I... sniff... I...
SOMEBODY HURT'CHU?
SURE LOOKS LIKE.
LUIS AN' HIS ROCKETEERS, I BET.
THAT PIG-- IEYUCH!
CALL THE COPS, MAYBE?
NO! PLEASE! NO POLICE.
NO BLOOD OR BRUISES.
REMEMBER HOW FRIEDA LOOKED THAT TIME?
MEN ARE PIGS.
BET SHE GOT DUMPED.
ROSALIE CRIED LIKE THIS WHEN LUTHER--!
MONEEK! BLAB IT TO THE WORLD, WHY DON'T'CHA?!
I AM... SORRY.
WHA' FOR?
SLUG WHO MADE YOU SO MISERABLE SHOULD BE SORRY.
SO, LIKE, YOU FROM AROUND HERE?
NOT WITH THAT ACCENT, DUMMY.
I'M MONIQUE.
SHIRLENE.
CARMEN.
ROSALIE.
FELICIA.
YO, RO, SHE'S BARE-FOOTED!
AN' THAT OUTFIT-- BET SHE GOT MUGGED ONNA WAY HOME FROM GYM.
IF SHE HAS A HOME.
I AM MEGGAN.
YOU'VE BEEN VERY KIND, BUT I MUST--
Uh-uh, MEG, NO WAY! THIS IS NO TIME FOR A GIRL TO BE ALONE.
TRUST ME, I'VE BEEN THERE. YOU NEED FRIENDS.
AN' YOU LUCKY GAL, YOU GOT US!
WHAT THIS CHILD NEEDS, CARMEN...
...IS SOME DECENT CLOTHES.
DRESSIN' LIKE THAT JUST GIVES THE BOYS IDEAS.
I KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULDN'T MIND THAT-- RIGHT, ROSALIE?
MOH-NEEEK!

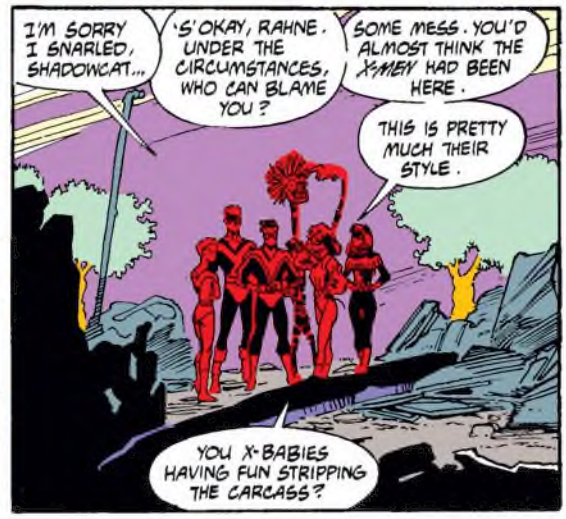

FORTY-ODD MILES NORTH OF NEW YORK CITY...
...JUST OUTSIDE THE TOWN OF SALEM CENTER...
...ON THE GROUNDS OF PROFESSOR XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS...
IT'S BEEN SMASHED T' BITS!
QUICK ON THE UPTAKE, CANNONBALL...
...AS EVER.
STOP BEIN' MEAN, 'BERTO.

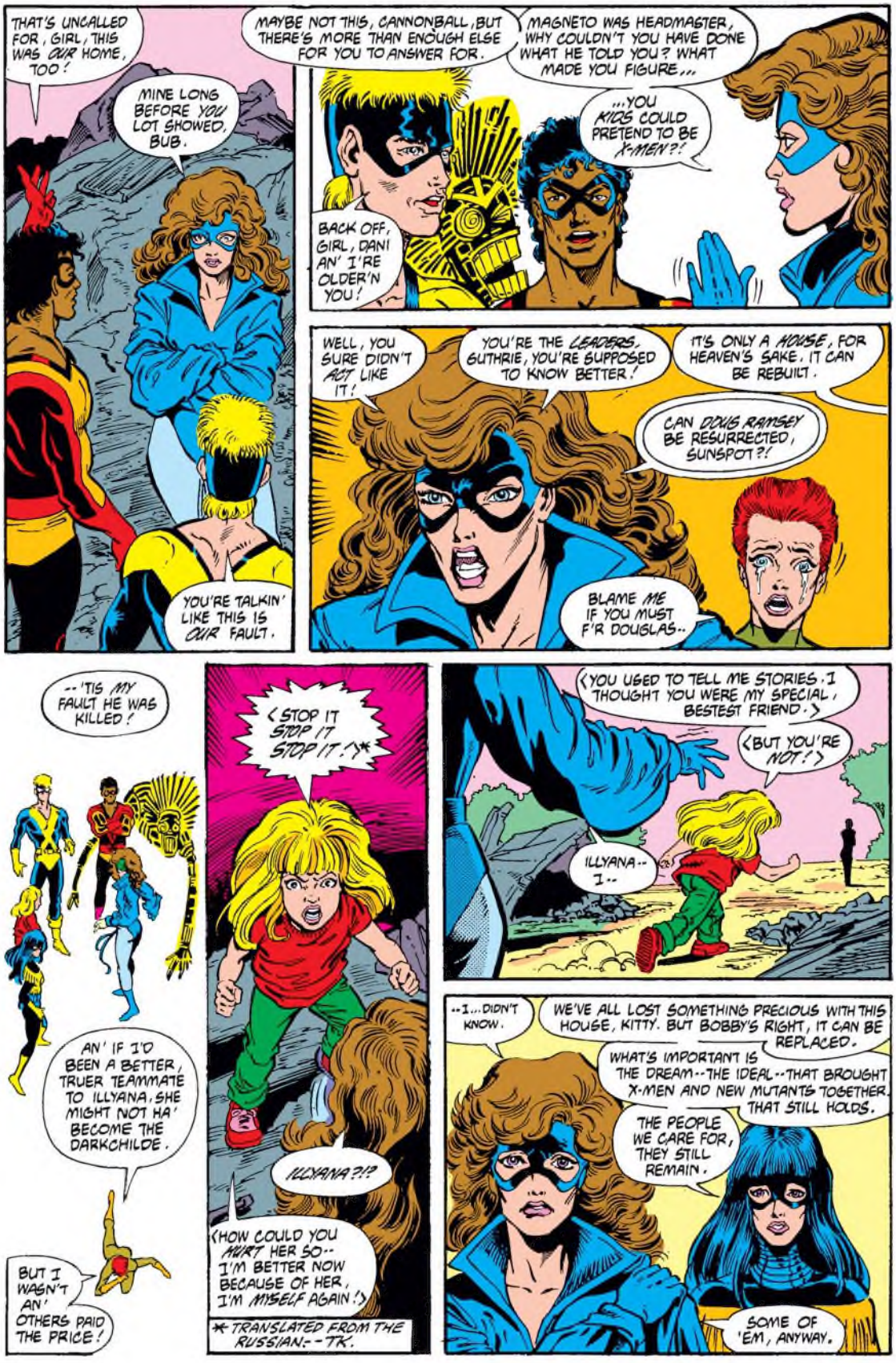
THIS IS TERRIBLE!
THE SCHOOL WAS OUR HOME. WHAT'LL WE DO--
--AIEOW!

SOMEONE'S HERE!
AN INTRUDER!
HAROLD THAT, WOLFSBANE.
GRRRRRRR


OUTTA SIGHT, OUTTA MIND, AIW, GUYS?
HOW QUICKLY SOME FORGET.
MEMORY CORRELATION ENGAGED. IDENTITY PROCESSING...

CONTACT CONFIRMED AS NEW MUTANTS' FRIEND...
...SHADOWCAT/KITTY-PRYDE!
YOU LOOK WELL.
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED...
...I COULD BE WORSE.

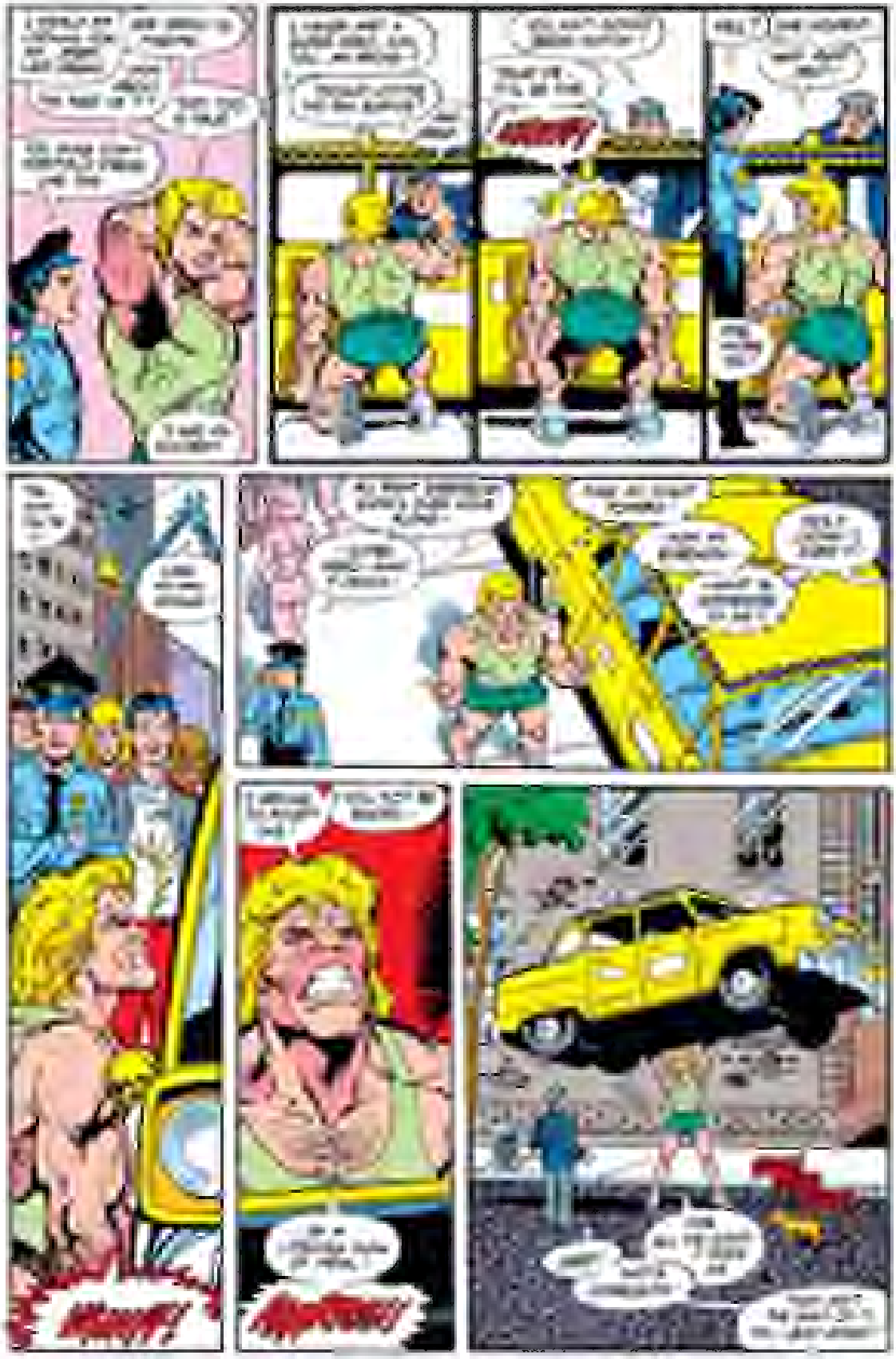

I'M SORRY I SNARLED, SHADOWCAT...
'S OKAY, RAHNE. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WHO CAN BLAME YOU?
SOME MESS. YOU'D ALMOST THINK THE X-MEN HAD BEEN HERE.
THIS IS PRETTY MUCH THEIR STYLE.
YOU X-BABIES HAVING FUN STRIPPING THE CARCASS?


THAT'S UNCALLED FOR, GIRL, THIS WAS OUR HOME, TOO!
MINE LONG BEFORE YOU LOT SHOWED, BUB.
YOU'RE TALKIN' LIKE THIS IS OUR FAULT.
MAYBE NOT THIS, CANNONBALL, BUT THERE'S MORE THAN ENOUGH ELSE FOR YOU TO ANSWER FOR.
MAGNETO WAS HEADMASTER, WHY COULDN'T YOU HAVE DONE WHAT HE TOLD YOU? WHAT MADE YOU FIGURE...
...YOU KIDS COULD PRETEND TO BE X-MEN?!
BACK OFF, GIRL, DANI AN' I'RE OLDER'N YOU!
WELL, YOU SURE DIDN'T ACT LIKE IT!
YOU'RE THE LEADERS, GUTHRIE, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO KNOW BETTER!
IT'S ONLY A HOUSE, FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE. IT CAN BE REBUILT.
CAN DOUG RAMSEY BE RESURRECTED, SUNSPOT?!
BLAME ME IF YOU MUST F'R DOUGLAS..
--'TIS MY FAULT HE WAS KILLED!
AN' IF I'D BEEN A BETTER, TRUER TEAMMATE TO ILLYANA, SHE MIGHT NOT HA' BECOME THE DARKCHILDE.
BUT I WASN'T AN' OTHERS PAID THE PRICE!
<STOP IT STOP IT STOP IT!>*
ILLYANA?!?
<HOW COULD YOU HURT HER SO-- I'M BETTER NOW BECAUSE OF HER, I'M MYSELF AGAIN!>
*TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN:--TK.
<YOU USED TO TELL ME STORIES. I THOUGHT YOU WERE MY SPECIAL, BESTEST FRIEND.>
<BUT YOU'RE NOT!>
ILLYANA-- I--
--I...DIDN'T KNOW.
WE'VE ALL LOST SOMETHING PRECIOUS WITH THIS HOUSE, KITTY. BUT BOBBY'S RIGHT, IT CAN BE REPLACED.
WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THE DREAM--THE IDEAL--THAT BROUGHT X-MEN AND NEW MUTANTS TOGETHER. THAT STILL HOLDS.
THE PEOPLE WE CARE FOR, THEY STILL REMAIN.
SOME OF 'EM, ANYWAY.

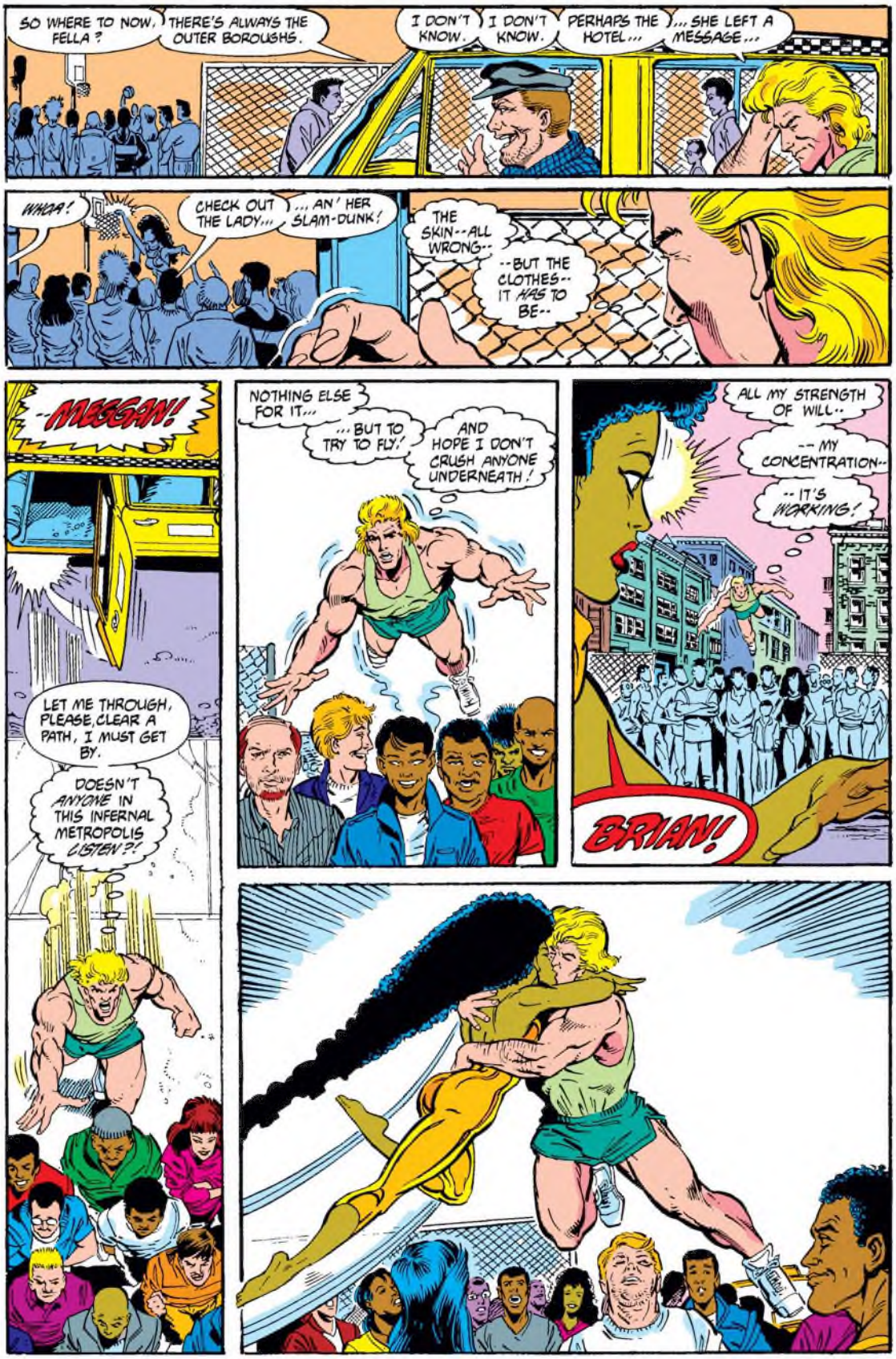
YOU WANT 'EM BACK, KITTY-- DOUG AND ILLYANA, AS YOU REMEMBER THEM--I CAN DO THAT.
ILLUSIONS. MIRAGE'S MIRAGE.
AS REAL AS LIFE, AS TRUE AS MIND AND HEART AND SOUL CAN MAKE THEM...
...FOR AS LONG AS YOU WISH.
SLAP FIVE, PRYDE. WHAT'S THE PROGRAM?
KIDDO, WE'VE GOT TO STOP MEETING LIKE THIS.
AIN'T HEALTHY.
NO. IT ISN'T.
LET 'EM GO, DANI, PLEASE.
BREAK YOUR SPELL.
IF IT'S ANY CONSOLATION, ILLYANA CHOSE TO SACRIFICE HERSELF.
I WAS HER BEST FRIEND, I SHOULD HAVE BEEN THERE!
KITTY, SHE WON HERSELF A SECOND CHANCE TO BE THE CHILD SHE ALWAYS YEARNED TO BE. DO YOU BEGRUDGE HER THAT?
NO.
FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, THE UNDERGROUND COMPLEX CHECKS OUT FINE.
SELF-REPAIR SYSTEMS HAVE THE WORK MOSTLY IN HAND. WHOLE PLACE'LL BE GOOD AS NEW IN NO TIME.
AS FOR THE REST--THE HOUSE AND ALL--THAT'S UP TO MOIRA MacTAGGERT. SHE'S EXECUTRIX OF PROFESSOR XAVIER'S ESTATE.
YOU GUYS GOING TO RELOCATE TO HER PLACE IN SCOTLAND?
WE'VE BEEN INVITED TO STAY WITH X-FACTOR.
YOU'RE MORE THAN WELCOME TO JOIN US.
THANKS. APPRECIATE THAT. REALLY. BUT...
...I WOULDN'T FEEL RIGHT!
MY TEAM WAS THE X-MEN, AND THEY'RE DEAD. MY FRIENDS IN THE NEW MUTANTS WERE DOUG AND ILLYANA, HE'S DEAD AND SHE... SHE...
...WHICH I KNOW IS FOR THE BEST. IT'S A MIRACLE HAPPY ENDING SHE MORE THAN DESERVES...
...BUT SHE WAS MY BEST FRIEND...
...AND I MISS HER SO MUCH!

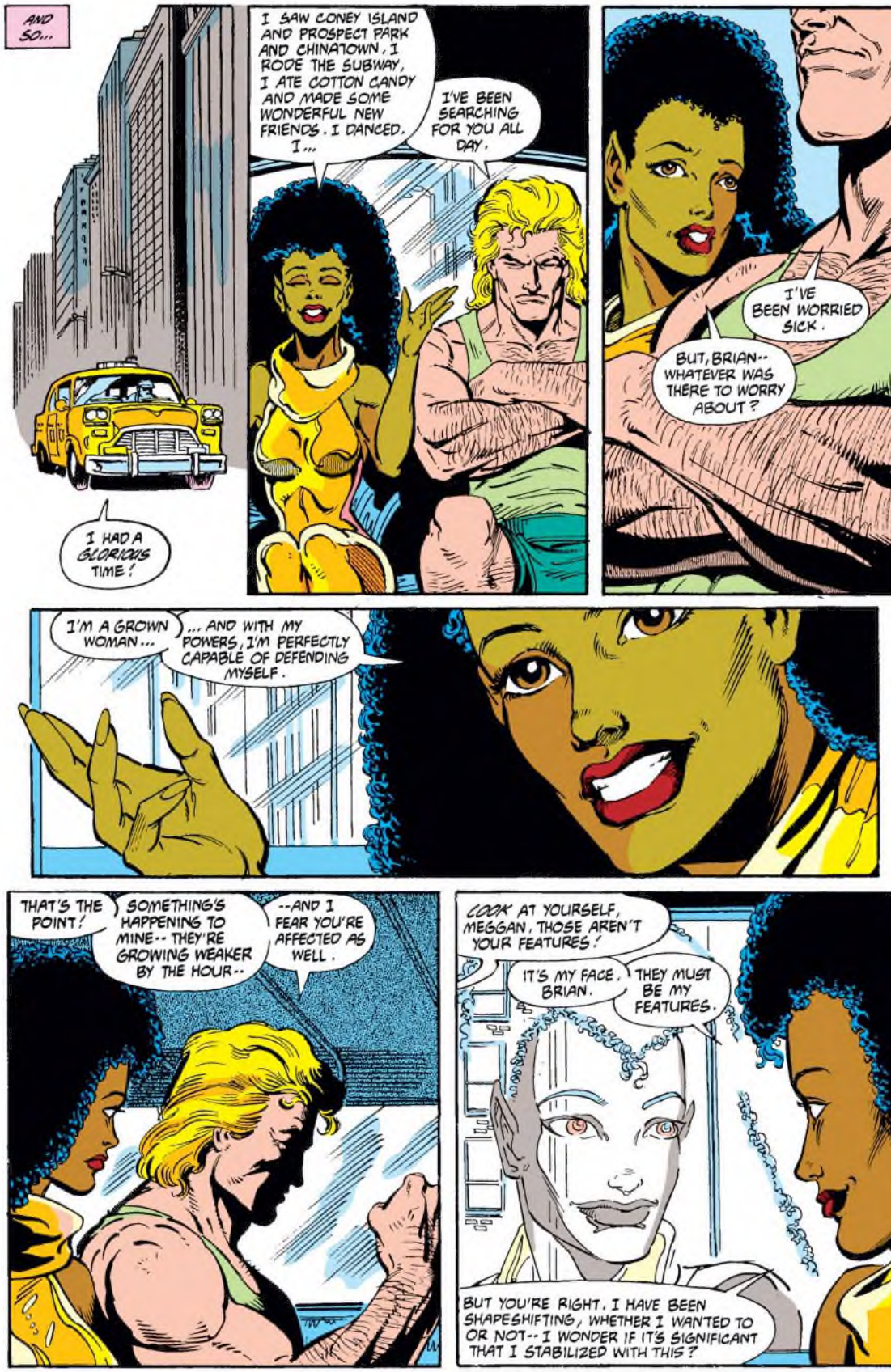
SMASH!
POW!

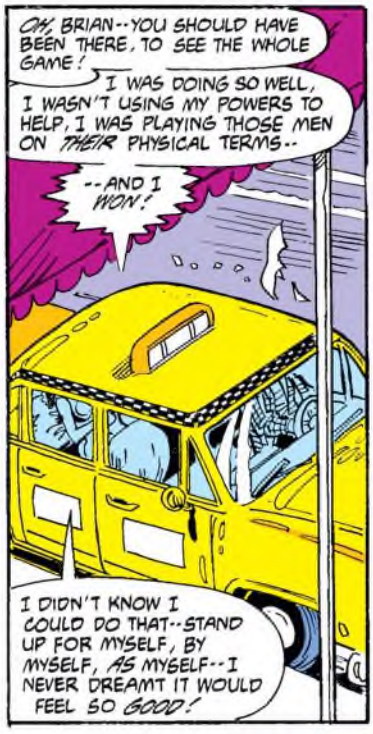
BLUSH!!



MEANWHILE...
...AT THE GREENWICH VILLAGE B'BALL COURTS, ON THE CORNER OF SIXTH AVENUE AND WEST FOURTH...
TWO POINTS!
EAT YOUR HEART OUT, LEVON!
THEY PLAY MAGNIFICENTLY.
I LIKE THE GAME AS WELL.
I COULD WATCH FOR HOURS.
A TEST OF SKILL AND STRENGTH AND STAMINA.
SPIN, WATCH IT!
MY ANKLE!
SHOOT, THERE'S THE GAME!
I WILL CARRY HIM.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
FEELS LIKE A SPRAIN.
GAME'S OVER FOR ME, GUYS!
TOUGH BREAK, MARTY, BUT YOU KNOW THE RULES.
YOU DON'T FINISH, YOU FORFEIT.
MAY I TAKE SPIN'S PLACE?
IN THE GAME?
SUBS ARE ALLOWED.
C'MON, MAN, BE SERIOUS.
YOU WANNA TURN THIS INTO A JOKE?
IT'S FINE WITH ME, MARTY, LET HER PLAY.
SURE STRUTS THE COURT BETTER'N ANYONE I EVER SEEN!
BUT CAN SHE PLAY?
I HAVE SEEN IT OFTEN ON THE TELEVISION.
AND I LEARN VERY FAST.
BAD NEWS, SPIN.
YOU GUYS ARE DOOMED!


SO WHERE TO NOW, FELLA?
THERE'S ALWAYS THE OUTER BOROUGHS.
I DON'T KNOW.
I DON'T KNOW.
PERHAPS THE HOTEL...
...SHE LEFT A MESSAGE...
WHOA!
CHECK OUT THE LADY...
...AN' HER SLAM-DUNK!
THE SKIN--ALL WRONG--
--BUT THE CLOTHES-- IT HAS TO BE--
--MEGGAN!
LET ME THROUGH, PLEASE, CLEAR A PATH, I MUST GET BY.
DOESN'T ANYONE IN THIS INFERNAL METROPOLIS LISTEN?!
NOTHING ELSE FOR IT...
...BUT TO TRY TO FLY!
AND HOPE I DON'T CRUSH ANYONE UNDERNEATH!
ALL MY STRENGTH OF WILL--
--MY CONCENTRATION--
--IT'S WORKING!
BRIAN!

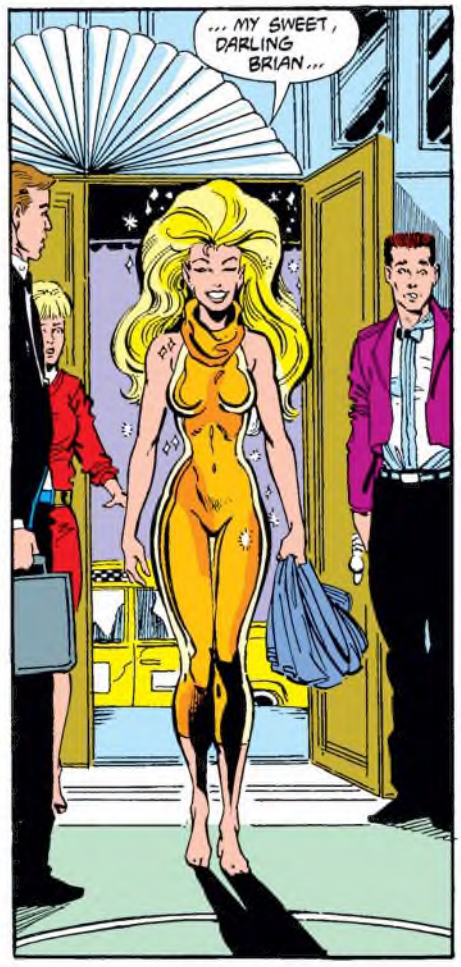

AND SO...
I HAD A GLORIOUS TIME!
I SAW CONEY ISLAND AND PROSPECT PARK AND CHINATOWN, I RODE THE SUBWAY, I ATE COTTON CANDY AND MADE SOME WONDERFUL NEW FRIENDS. I DANCED. I...
I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR YOU ALL DAY.
I'VE BEEN WORRIED SICK.
BUT, BRIAN-- WHATEVER WAS THERE TO WORRY ABOUT?
I'M A GROWN WOMAN...
... AND WITH MY POWERS, I'M PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF DEFENDING MYSELF.
THAT'S THE POINT!
SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO MINE-- THEY'RE GROWING WEAKER BY THE HOUR--
--AND I FEAR YOU'RE AFFECTED AS WELL.
LOOK AT YOURSELF, MEGGAN, THOSE AREN'T YOUR FEATURES!
IT'S MY FACE, BRIAN.
THEY MUST BE MY FEATURES.
BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. I HAVE BEEN SHAPESHIFTING, WHETHER I WANTED TO OR NOT-- I WONDER IF IT'S SIGNIFICANT THAT I STABILIZED WITH THIS?


OH, BRIAN--YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN THERE, TO SEE THE WHOLE GAME!
I WAS DOING SO WELL, I WASN'T USING MY POWERS TO HELP, I WAS PLAYING THOSE MEN ON THEIR PHYSICAL TERMS--
--AND I WON!
I DIDN'T KNOW I COULD DO THAT--STAND UP FOR MYSELF, BY MYSELF, AS MYSELF--I NEVER DREAMT IT WOULD FEEL SO GOOD!

RIDE'S OVER, BUB, TIME TA PAY THE TAB. METER PLUS TIP.
CERTAINLY--ER, AH, UH--MY WALLET!?!
HERE IT COMES, A SOOPER HERO SOB STORY, I SHOULD'A GUESSED!
NO, I HAVE, I HAD--IT MUST HAVE BEEN STOLEN!
SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW. G'WAN, GIDDADDAHERE, YA STIFF!

WILL THIS SUFFICE?
MISS--
--ANYTIME!

MY SHARE OF, WHAT DO THE AMERICANS CALL IT, THE POT!
ALLOW ME THIS ONCE...


...MY SWEET, DARLING BRIAN...

...TO SAVE YOU!
DUTY
NEXT:
THE TWO-EDGED SWORD!